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SCHOOLS

McCall Middle School Civics Project: AI usage in education

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Students at the McCall Middle School are urging school officials to look at adding AI policies to student handbooks. COURTESY PHOTO/IT CHRONICLES

The following was submitted by the following eighth-grade students from the McCall Middle School for their civics project: Lola Borchardt, Scarlett Aspen Apodaca, and Josie Monk.

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Artificial Intelligence has been around since the mid-20th century, however for the first time, the harms of AI have begun to outweigh the benefits.

For years AI has been able to do specific simple tasks such as playing chess and solving math equations, tasks that follow basic algorithms. In contrast, today AI can have full conversations, mimic human language and can go undetected.

This is a growing issue as falsely generated information becomes the norm in AI generated content. For the past century artificial intelligence has not been very influential in society, but AI today is an emergent capability that has great effects on the world but also many new challenges, such as in education.

Before the emergence of accessible AI cheating was common but also difficult to get away with. With AI however, it is easier than ever for students to quickly and effectively complete an assignment that looks original and like their own work. This has a huge impact on other students as well as the students cheating. Honest students are becoming discouraged as they watch their peers get better grades than them because they used AI to do their work for them.

Furthermore, students who are using AI to complete assignments aren't learning critical thinking skills and are unable to think deeply and generate their own ideas. Although AI has a huge impact on students, it may have an even larger impact on teachers' abilities to teach students.

Teachers "don't know what a student's real skills are" and are "forced to have students complete writing assignments in class" (Katie Thompson). English teachers are constantly seeing essays that are written by

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language teachers are seeing a decline in actual learning as more and more students rely on translators to complete work.

Moreover, math teachers are seeing students using math solvers to do their homework which harms students' abilities to learn the actual concepts. Despite the negative aspects of AI, if used responsibly it can expedite the learning process.

Although many students are using it inappropriately, some use it to help them get a deeper understanding of a topic to deepen their understanding beyond what they learned in class, particularly in confusing math concepts.

Additionally, AI is very helpful to teachers when developing lesson plans and making learning more engaging for students. When used appropriately AI can help rather than harm students' learning. Overall, there are many harms and benefits to AI, however it is necessary to create a balance where students can learn but not cheat with AI.

Neither the McCall nor Winchester High School student handbooks have existing policies regarding usage of AI. As defined in the Winchester High School handbook cheating is “the dishonest violation of rules, or giving or receiving unauthorized information in academic, extracurricular, or other schoolwork, so as to give an unfair advantage” (Winchester High School Student Handbook).

Although AI could be argued to be unauthorized information, this policy does not provide specific enough information about the usage of AI. Recent events such as the lawsuit against Hingham High School, where a student won a lawsuit against his school who gave him a zero for using AI on a history project, have shown us that if specific policies are not created, use of AI could be argued to be ethical.

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Overall, the McCall and Winchester High School handbooks need to contain more specific policies regarding AI.

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Winchester High School club hopes art contest will foster interest in Black history, culture

When then-freshman Christie Clark approached Carson Sarpong about becoming a co-founder for her club, Black Student Union, he was hesitant. Three years later, Sarpong is the president, and the club has organized the Black History Project, a contest that invites students to create art about Black history and culture. The

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Winchester High School's speech and debate team sees a meteoric rise

Winchester's speech and debate team, like most things, began with only a handful of students competing in its inaugural year and receiving little attention from the school. Yet now, what began as a modest club for fun, has grown into something significant and respected by the entire Massachusetts debate

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Winchester High School Athletic Department reschedules open house for 8th graders

The following was submitted by the Winchester High School Athletics Department: On Monday, Feb. 2, the Winchester High School Athletics Department will be hosting its rescheduled open house night for 8th graders from 6:30-8:30 p.m. in the auditorium. Come to an informational meeting, meet the coaches, learn

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EVENTS

Winchester High School Black Student Union launches 'Black History Project' contest, community showcase

The following was submitted by the Black Student Union at Winchester High School: The Black Student Union (BSU) at Winchester High School (WHS) is proud to announce the launch of the Black History Project, a contest designed to foster education, research, and creative expression surrounding Black history and culture. The

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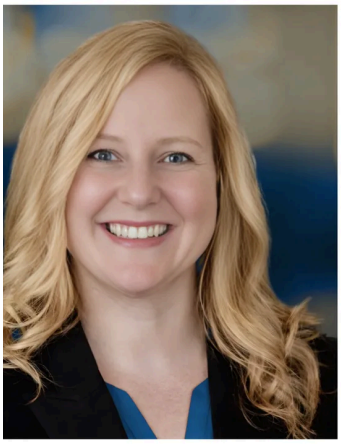

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Winchester School Committee candidates bring contrasting backgrounds to Thursday forum

Two candidates for Winchester's School Committee will face voters at a forum as the district navigates a new literacy curriculum, budget pressures and questions about student mental health. Heather von Mering and John Bellaire are competing for an open seat on the School Committee, which oversees a budget von

WILL DOWD | STAFF WRITER

March 4, 2026

'Chicago: Teen Edition' dances onto the Winchester High School stage

By Talia Ho | Correspondent Fame. Fortune. And all that jazz. This spring, Winchester High School presents "Chicago: Teen Edition," a bold musical that explores celebrity culture, media manipulation, and the cost of ambition. Set in the 1920s, this iconic production is sure to leave the audience wanting more. Performances will

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EVENTS

Ripley Chapel in Winchester presents 'Syldason: You Are Welcome Here'

The following was submitted by the Ripley Chapel at First Congregational Church: On Friday, March 13, beginning at 7:30 p.m., live in-person and live streamed from the stunning Ripley Chapel at First Congregational Church, Winchester, 21 Church St., join in with Syldason, a duo concert featuring Sylvie Zakarian,

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Rep. Michael Day helps House colleagues pass sweeping energy affordability bill

The following was submitted by the Office of Rep. Michael S. Day: Rep. Michael S. Day and his colleagues in the House of Representatives recently passed energy affordability legislation that would result in over $9 billion in savings for utility ratepayers over the next 10 years. The bill maintains critical

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